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AN OPERATIC WAR.

SOME years ago, an American artist was pleased to give me, in a very bright and entertaining way, her impressions of English people and English things. At one moment the merry face clouded over, and she said, "May I speak what I think about your newspapers?" Begged to do so without reserve, the fair lady continued: "Well, now, it strikes me they are terribly dull. They are always arguing principles instead of discussing persons. The world is made up of persons, and when I open a paper, I want to know how the world is dressed, what it says, where it is going, and so on. But your journals bore me with essays." Let me confess to the flashing up of an uncharitable thought that, perhaps, my diverting friend saw too little concerning herself in the peccant sheets. However, I pleaded guilty for English journalism, and contritely admitted its limping far behind that of her own land. Since then we have made up a good deal of lost ground, and for imaginativeness and malice in printed gossip need not blush before the typical Transatlantic editor. There is, however, still room for improvement, especially in the domain of musical journalism. For the most part, English critics deal with questions of art rather than with topics personal to artists. They do not run about picking up the sayings and watching the doings of notable singers and players; nor do they venture to inflict upon their editors columns of "copy" respecting the progress of an engagement between manager and prima donna. This is old-fashioned and hum-drum, no doubt, but only the great army of readers can change it. Will they do so? Shall we see the critic transformed into the collector of small talk, and required to dog the footsteps of a fashionable "leading lady" rather than to serve the classic muse? The best possible answer now would be a mere guess, but I mean to show the readers of THE LUTE what such a change must imply. In so doing I may instruct some of them; I shall certainly divert all.

Next winter there will be rival Italian operas in New York, and during some months past the opposing managers—Mr. Mapleson on the one hand; Mr. Abbey on the other—have striven for possession of favourite artists. Both were naturally anxious at the outset to secure Madame Adelina Patti, the most popular of all, but for some time, neither could make progress. The fascinating and artless prima donna seems to have treated the rival managers much as a coquette deals with rival lovers. She doubtless listened to both, while gently murmuring:—

"How happy could I be with either,
Were 't other dear charmer away."

Who shall blame her? She but exercised the privilege of her sex in bringing adorers to their knees and keeping them there. It was, of course, only incidental that, while suspense lasted, Mr. Mapleson bid against Mr. Abbey, and Mr. Abbey against Mr. Mapleson, till the proffered "settlement" reached a fabulous sum, going up more and more rapidly as the time approached for Madame Patti's return to Europe. Had all this happened in England, journalism would have given it an occasional paragraph and no more. The New York papers filled columns with it, and in the crisis of the struggle came out with sensational headings as though the fate of an empire trembled in the balance. I have taken the trouble to read some of them and make a consecutive story from their reports of the closing fight. It is an edifying tale of personal journalism and contemporary artistic life.

The twenty-third day of April last was "the most eventful one known since Colonel Mapleson hoisted his standard above the walls of the Academy." All through its weary hours, sounds of battle were heard, and in the afternoon a reporter left the *Times* office for the gallant Colonel's head-quarters to see how the fight was getting on. He found suspense and anxiety there, sitting on a group of *aides*. Mr. Croft; "wearing a thoughtful look and a heavy brown overcoat appeared to be awaiting developments and an invitation to go out and see a man." Mr. Arment had put on a smiling face, though his silk hat looked a little dim and lustreless; Mr. Angelo, in an overcoat "that would have covered a pair of horses," seemed thoughtful, and the rest expectant. They were silent, moreover, save when one or another suggested the propriety of going across the way to examine some newly imported Rhine wine. "What are you all waiting for?" said the reporter, and was answered, "To find out about that Patti engagement." Just then the chief entered, amid cries of "How goes the day?" The Colonel shook his head. Abbey had brought up fresh reserves. "He has offered her another thousand dollars!" Mapleson was as anxious as Wellington just before Blucher's guns opened. "You can't fight Vanderbilt, you know," he said, plaintively, "that is, not if you are only an Italian opera manager." On all other points the Colonel showed that Abbey was completely "out of the running." Lucca, Sembrich, Tremelli, Valleria, Lablache, stood bound to the Academy, and Gerster would sing there if she came to America at all. Here the reporter put in a word on the other side: "Mr. Abbey has a very strong tenor in Signor Campanini." The Colonel admitted it, but doubted whether he would appear, and gave reasons, which are both



physiologically and historically so curious—to say the least—that I reproduce them in full. "A singer's voice, let me tell you, is like a very fine musical instrument—that's just what it is, in fact. It has got to be kept in use all the time. Now, when Mario was singing for me in London, he was doing splendidly, but he came to me and said he needed a rest. I argued with him, and told him he did not, but he insisted, and I released him. He never sang another note. Annie Louise Carey went away from me to take a month's rest, and she never sang again. Now, Campanini has been taking a year's rest. Do you think he would do that and live by spending his own money, when there are any number of European managers ready to give him any price to sing for them? I don't believe he is coming to America at all." With this exercise of a splendid imaginative faculty, the manager dismissed Abbey's last hope, and his own interlocutor at the same time.

The reporter next presented himself at the enemy's quarters, and found Mr. Abbey, whom he calls an "incipient impresario," standing near the box office of Fifth Avenue Theatre. Here is a pen and ink sketch of Colonel Mapleson's doughty foe: "A very shiny silk hat crowned his raven locks, and his luxuriant dark moustache stood out on each side of his mouth with an air of distinction. A standing collar of generous height encircled his neck, and a dark overcoat with expansive silk facings hung upon his broad shoulders. In the centre of his dazzling white percale shirt glittered a single stud, the central figure of which was a large emerald surrounded by half-a-dozen gleaming diamonds. From beneath his waistcoat dangled a large gold seal. His countenance was smiling, and his manner of speech gave evidence that he was not weighted down by the importance of his position." With this impressive personage, the reporter did not get on so well as with the generous and communicative Colonel. Mr. Abbey dealt only in negatives; his "manner of speech" reminding one of "Non mi ricordo," as used at the trial of Queen Catherine, and "Non possumus" as employed by the late Pope. Oh, no! Mr. Abbey had done nothing; he had not engaged Patti; he had not, in fact, engaged anybody, and it was of no consequence. "I'm in no hurry," said Mr. Abbey, and sauntered away, softly smiling. Thereupon the astute reporter hastened back to the Mapleson camp, and found consternation where he had left anxiety. "Abbey's got Patti," was the cry that rang around in melancholy accents. There could be no mistake, for had not Mapleson's business manager seen the contract? An hour or two later the Colonel announced to his "benefit" audience that the *diva* would sing for him. Imagine the perplexity of the poor reporter! What was he to believe and make the next morning's public believe with him? In this state of mind he again encountered the Colonel, now radiant, save when he thought of the price to be paid for his triumph—5,000 dollars a night; or, on the whole season, 25,000 dollars more than under the previous contract. "This is Abbey's doing," said the victorious manager, and straightway called

his rival a "guastamastière," adding impressively, "Don't forget that word." So ended the memorable twenty-third of April.

On the morning of the 24th, a *Herald* reporter saw, in front of the Windsor Hotel, a wagon loaded with large trunks, some bearing Patti's name; some Nicolini's. A few minutes later he stood in the lady's "parlors," armed with a note-book and pencil. The fair tenant had astonishing witness to bear. "Nothing is settled yet," said Mdme. Patti. "But," interjected the startled journalist, "you have decided to sign with Colonel Mapleson, have you not?" The *diva* at once used uncomplimentary language: "I am very displeased with that person, and I would give—oh! I would give anything—if he had nothing to do with the business." "How have you displeased you?" "Oh! in ever so many ways. . . . He has had many opportunities of saying things nice and pleasant about me, but he has generally done the reverse." Madame Patti then favoured the reporter with a glimpse of the Colonel in his *vie intime* as a manager:—"Colonel Mapleson comes here when he wants me to sing, and he calls me 'my dear child,' and he goes down on both knees and kisses my hands, and he has, you know, quite a supplicating face, and it is not easy to be firm with a man of such suavity of manners. But I can say that I would be heartily glad if Colonel Mapleson had nothing to do with this matter at the Academy." Mdme. Patti then turned to Mr. Abbey:—"I would be ever so happy if I could sing for Mr. Abbey. He is such a delightful manager. I have always had the pleasantest business arrangements with him." After this, the reporter was no nearer the object of his quest, but eventually he came upon it, or, perhaps, fancied he saw it in the fact that Abbey offered the smaller salary but the larger guarantee, Mapleson the smaller guarantee but the larger salary. One or the other might advance, and in the interests of fair play all round there would be no signature till just before the ship sailed. At midnight, on board the *Arizona*, Mdme. Patti was still uncertain, so remaining till her agent, M. Franchi, arrived with news that he had pledged her to the Academy. The satisfied reporter then went away, taking with him the artist's last words, "I am very sorry for Abbey, but, mind, this is done for Mr. Gye, not for Colonel Mapleson."

Meanwhile Mr. Abbey had been interviewed at his theatre, and found in a placid state of mind. He was not disappointed; he meant to sleep well that night, and to give New York such an opera next season as it never before had. A little later the Colonel also expressed an intention to sleep well, for, as he poetically put it, "The strife is o'er, the battle's done." Coming down to prose, the gallant victor added, "I have called in my scouts, and grog has been served all round."

The battle, as it chanced, was not over. Early in the morning, Abbey got round the Colonel's flanks, and attacked his rear with such vigour that when the *Herald* reporter came on the scene he found Mapleson in the midst of strife, but calm and self-possessed, like all great captains. He was busy

signing the contracts of his chorus, some members of which the enemy had surprised and captured. "Four," said the Colonel, "that I had no further use for, and I believe Abbey picked them up at once, at advanced rates." The foe had also carried off Corsini, Costa, and Caravatti, but this troubled their whilom chief so little that he launched into a dissertation upon his chorus singers, "on whom falls the weight of the season," and of whom he expressed himself very proud. "The public often wonder," remarked Colonel Mapleson, "how they take their parts so easily. There is nothing strange about it. They rehearse in real life at home all the characters that they assume on my stage. In a few weeks you will read of their doings in the newspapers." The ingenuous reporter was struck by these words, and going down to Moretti's, came upon a group of the Colonel's brigands. They were "putting in next season's supply of maccaroni," but had breath to confirm their chief's words. "Of course we can act," said one. "Next week we go home to rehearse for the fall. In a few weeks you will hear of an English nobleman, attacked and carried off to a cave in the Italian mountains. Little will it be imagined that the outlaws are only Mapleson's chorus rehearsing for his new opera." "Do the ladies also rehearse with you in Italy?" meekly queried the reporter. "Oh, yes," answered the brigand, "while we rob and kill, they make love and poison dukes. A beautiful tender girl who is with us has been singing in one part for thirty years. She has been asked to be a *prima donna*, but she is too good an artist to leave the chorus. She is great in poison scenes. . . . This is a great and noble life that we lead." The reporter went away.

There remains to record the Colonel's observations upon Mdme. Patti's thrust at him. "That was only a bit of acting on her part. Why we are the best of friends. I am sure she thinks the world and all of me positively. Franchi told me to-day that Patti had only said this for effect, and that she would make it right when I went to London. Patti displeased with me! Why how could she be? She has given me a pressing invitation to spend a week at her Welsh castle, Craig-y-Nos. Egad! I think I'll accept it. She'll be so glad to see me." With this "flourish" the gallant chief retired from the field of victory, his blushing honours thick upon him.

I have imagined nothing of the foregoing, the whole story, and much more, duly appeared in the leading dailies of New York, and this is personal journalism carried into the domain of music. How does the English reader like it, apart from any amusement it may afford? Shall we Americanise our fourth estate for the sake of the dignity and usefulness thereby to be secured; for the sake of giving artists that sense of personal importance in which they are notoriously lacking, and for the benefit which will accrue when the public take more note of interpreters than of the thing interpreted? These questions are worth considering.

JOSEPH BENNETT.

REMINISCENCES OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS ABROAD.

V.—PESTH.

It was during my third visit to the stately and hospitable capital of Hungary, that I became personally acquainted with Robert Volkmann, whose fame as a composer had at that time (1867) but just reached public cognizance in Vienna, where, during the foregoing winter season, Hellmesberger had produced for the first time the gifted Hungarian's *Erstes Streich-Quatuor* in G minor (opus 14)—a work that caused no small sensation amongst the musical virtuosi and amateurs of the Kaiserstadt. At the time I refer to he was no longer a young man, and the story of his life had thitherto been one of bitter disappointments and harassing privations. During early manhood and middle age his countrymen had refused to recognise his genius, which gave birth to compositions they were incapable of understanding—for the art of music, until very lately, was but little cultivated in Hungary, and the Magyars, as a rule, were stolidly indifferent to any strains save those of their national dance, the czardás—and his extreme poverty precluded him from either publishing any of his works on his own account, or paying executants to play them at concerts or private musical entertainments. A few years before the date of my introduction to him he had, however, succeeded in persuading a publisher established in Pesth to print some of his songs and concerted pieces (amongst them the stringed quartet above referred to and two noble trios, op. 3 and 5, the shining merits of which have of late years obtained universal acknowledgment) upon terms of remuneration that barely enabled Volkmann to keep body and soul together by furnishing him with the minimum amount of nourishment upon which an adult human being can contrive to exist. Throughout a considerable portion of that period of Hungarian national stagnation during which the Constitution was suspended, Robert Volkmann was practically the bondsman of this close-fisted publisher, whose payments for his successive works took the form of a wretched pittance, scarcely sufficient to defray the rent of a dismal garret in Buda and the cost of exiguous daily rations, consisting chiefly of bread, cheese and vegetables. During the severe Hungarian winters, Volkmann frequently lacked the wherewithal to purchase fuel—an expensive article in the Kingdom of the Five Rivers—and, his clothes being too shabby to wear in the streets by daylight, he was compelled, in order to keep up the circulation in his extremities, to pace up and down his miserable garret for hours at a stretch, or to remain in bed. That his productiveness was comparatively speaking small under such conditions of hardship cannot be wondered at; what works he did compose, however, during those years of tribulation, became the property of his leasor, whom they were destined to enrich. Volkmann, himself, never got anything by them but scanty food, sordid raiment, and a lodging at which a London footman would turn up his nose with scornful indignation, were he required to occupy it whilst "in service."

The early spring of 1867 was a season of patriotic rejoicing and feverish emotion for the Hungarian nation. For eighteen years Hungary had been dealt with as a conquered country; all the political and administrative institutions had been in abeyance, and the heel of oppression had not been lifted from her neck for a single hour. Austrian military reverses in 1866, however, compelled Kaiser Franz Josef to make large concessions to his Magyar subjects, the concrete outcome of which was a transaction between the moieties of the Dual Realm which has endured to the present day and may possibly last for many years to come. One of the most strikingly manifest results of this transaction was the "King's" visit to Pesth in the character of a Constitutional monarch—his first appearance in the Magyar capital since the days of his boyhood. It was my special mission to witness his reception and the fêtes given publicly and privately in honour of the reconciliation achieved between victors and vanquished. Pepi Hellmesberger, with his customary intelligence, had made arrangements to give two concerts during the week of national elation, knowing full well that the capital would be thronged with representative Magyars, free-handed and pleasure-loving, their pockets full of paper currency destined to be squandered in recreation and revelry. I accompanied the "quadrilateral of harmony" under his command to Pesth, and punctually attended its first performance at the Redoute, where I lighted upon my old friend Camillo Sivori, attracted to the twin-cities by the prospect of a golden harvest, and found myself included, through Hellmesberger's influence, in an invitation addressed to the "musical and literary celebrities honouring Pesth with a visit" by Heckenast, the leading publisher of the Hungarian capital, to a supper-party at his mansion in a street with a poly-syllabic, and, to any tongue save that of a born Magyar, unpronounceable name. Heckenast, an enlightened and liberal patron of the arts, had at that time but recently "discovered" Robert Volkmann, and taken the luckless composer under his protection. He happened to mention, in the "artists' room" at the Redoute, that we should meet Volkmann at supper, and Hellmesberger at once suggested an agreeable surprise for the latter—with whose gloomy past he was acquainted—in the shape of a post-coenal performance of the G minor quartet by the Viennese quartet party, the members of which, having rehearsed the work a day or two before in view of a private concert for which they had been engaged by Count George Karolyi, had it so to speak at their fingers' ends. The genial suggestion was adopted by acclamation, and as soon as the concert had terminated, Heckenast's guests, some twenty in number, were conducted by their host to his residence, where they found Volkmann and one or two other local notabilities awaiting them.

A glance at the great Hungarian composer sufficed to convince any observant person that he had before him a man of sorrow, acquainted with grief. His bowed shoulders and sad, lustreless eyes, told a tale of excessive application, toil at the desk and immoderate consumption of "midnight oil." A

heavy, drooping, grizzled moustache enhanced the melancholy expression of his countenance, furrowed by the pencil of care rather than of time, and "sicklid o'er" with a sallow pallor by long years of confinement to small rooms, insufficient nutriment and lack of exercise. His chief characteristic appeared to be an invincible shyness, almost amounting to painful timidity. To me he conveyed the impression of a nature, originally gentle and diffident, that had been subdued by ill-luck and unkind usage to a chronic condition of self-depreciation and hopelessness. To my endeavours to draw him into conversation he replied with discouraging brevity, in low and hesitating tones. His black clothes—too manifestly a *qui-devant* gala suit, induced only upon occasions of exceptional pomp and moment—were threadbare and of strangely antiquated cut. Even Hellmesberger's kindly jesting and inexhaustible flow of apposite anecdote failed to brighten Volkmann's mournful visage with even a fleeting smile, until our host's good cheer and generous wine had somewhat thawed the ice of his inborn reserve and habitual low spirits. Towards the end of supper, when cigars had been lighted and champagne was flowing freely, he began to take part in the conversation, which was of an extraordinarily animated and brilliant character, dealing mainly with the two topics in which everyone present was more or less keenly interested—music and the political resurrection of Hungary. It was in commenting upon the latter, rather than upon the former, that Volkmann displayed knowledge and eloquence of no ordinary calibre. In speaking of the public men by whom the transaction with Austria had been brought about, he let fall a few masterly sketches of character revealing a depth of psychological insight that took most of his hearers by surprise. Upon the potentialities of music, as a descriptive art, he made some very striking remarks, never at any considerable length, but, like a meat-lozenge, containing much essential force compactly pro pounded. Commenting, for instance, on the Wagnerian theories, he observed: "Music, like painting, is imitative, not reproductive. Her imitations are necessarily addressed to persons gifted with musical apprehension, just as those of painting appeal only to the eye that is appreciative of colour or form. Her graphic power is not indicative of concrete facts, but of their characteristics, and makes itself readily manifested to the ear that is at once receptive and cultivated. Even that ear requires, in nine cases out of ten, to be prepared for the recognition of a tone-description by a certain amount of information, conveyed to the intelligence in the ordinary manner. . . . A mere melody is seldom able to tell its own story intelligibly. I mean, of course, the story its composer intends it to tell. *Tempi*, phrasing, and harmonic treatment are more available, as musical narrators—or, rather, describers—than tunes. The inevitable formality of a tune fetters its faculty of depicting ideas, circumstances or actions, all of which may be recognisably sketched in sound by imitative figures and

instrumental combinations. . . . That information other than oral is indispensable, in descriptive music, to the hearer's perception of the meaning sought to be conveyed to him, is beyond a doubt. For instance, the special significance of certain rhythmical mannerisms and accents in our national music cannot but be lost upon those who possess no acquaintance with Hungarian history, traditions and manners. In my own attempt to describe musically the ordinary incidents of a day's life in a Hungarian frontier-stronghold of the olden time, I feel confident that I have made my tone-sketches comprehensible to such of my countrymen as may be endowed with musical understanding. To the average foreign musician my special meanings can only appear in the light of eccentricities in tonality."

It was long past midnight when Hellmesberger suddenly rose in his place and exclaimed, "Enough talk for the present. Let us have some music. Sivori is dying to play us something classical of his own composition; and I—I have brought with me a new quartet by a young composer whose name I forget—he is a mere boy and none of you have ever heard of him—which I and my comrades here would like to play to Volkmann. Heckenast, I know you have a four-sided desk somewhere in this hovel of yours; produce it, and let us get to work. We will play in the next room, opening the folding doors, and my Englishman shall turn over. Our audience, including the *maestro*, who looks so comfortable that I would not have him disturbed for the world, shall remain in here and listen, if they please to do so." Sivori laughingly begged to be allowed to hear the "new work" before contributing his mite to the entertainment, and without further delay the pre-arranged "surprise" was put into execution. Volkmann sat ensconced in a huge arm-chair, smoking a powerful Partagas, his eyes half-closed, and his whole attitude expressive of that blissful state of body and mind, *hight kief*. As the executants commenced the spirited Allegro with which his G minor quartet opens, every eye was turned towards him. He started up, as though stricken by an electric shock, hastily put down his cigar and clutched both arms of the *fauteuil*, looking about him confusedly, like one suddenly awakened from a deep sleep. Presently, he sank back into his seat, covering his face with his hands; and when we next caught a glimpse of his sad grey eyes, they were wet with happy tears. Never before or since that memorable night have I heard the quartet—perhaps his most passionate and romantic composition for strings—so magnificently played, or so enthusiastically applauded. At its close, a shout of "Eljen à Volkmann!" was raised by all present, and Heckenast called upon his guests to drink "the Master's" health in brimming bumpers of Roederer. Rendered speechless by glad emotion, Volkmann could only express his gratification by repeatedly pressing the artistic hands that had wrought him such paramount pleasure, his cheeks glistening the while with "unfamiliar brine." A little later, when he had recovered his self-possession, he sate down to the

piano of his own accord and held us spell-bound for some twenty minutes with an improvisation "on a heroic subject," (which I recognised years after in his *recueil* of "Musical Poems," intituled "Visegrád") ever to be remembered by the survivors of that joyous company as an extempore production of unique beauty and indescribable fascination.

During my brief sojourn in Pesth on the above-mentioned occasion and in connection with the so-called "Reconciliation Week," I underwent a very curious and exceptional musical experience, chiefly worth recalling because so pre-eminently illustrative of the wild excitement then prevailing throughout all classes of Hungarian society, and finding vent in extravagances of action that struck me at the time as all but incompatible with sanity of mind in their perpetrators. One of the fêtes organised by the patricians and artists of Pesth in honour of the great national rejoicing was announced under the amazing title of "A Fool's Evening, given by the Committee of Folly," and came off one Sunday evening in the Grand Redoute, with the co-operation of over five thousand persons of both sexes, one and all earnestly bent upon proving themselves, in appearance and behaviour, bereft of their senses. The entertainment lasted ten hours; and I am bound to say that, from beginning to end, it was an uninterrupted and kaleidoscopic display of more or less humorous insanity. I could fill half a dozen pages with a catalogue *déraisonné* of its anomalies and absurdities; the space at my command, however, only permits a brief reference to those eccentricities which partook of a specially musical character. After the possessor of a voucher (himself necessarily travestied into some maniacal seeming) had passed the ordeal of examination by the Committee, stationed on the grand staircase, he was received with triumphal blasts, at the main entrance to the hall, by a "Mad Orchestra" consisting of ten bugles, eight side-drums, and one violin. Deafened and dizzy with the incomparable din of this braying and thumping cohort, he passed through a flame-coloured wicket into the Redoute, converted for the nonce into the semblance of a gigantic menagerie, its walls lined with dens of the most approved pattern, their grated doors flung wide open. Returning for convenience from the third to the first person, I may state that the first question which occurred to me as I glanced round that astonishing apartment was, "Where are the wild beasts?" A second later they "jumped to the eye," as the French idiom hath it, on a raised platform at the further end of the hall, pent up in an enormous built cage some twenty feet high, and constituting an orchestra, eighty in number, assiduously engaged in performing *The Beautiful Blue Danube*. The disguises were admirable, and had been allotted to their wearers in such sort as to intensify the general incongruity suggested by furred and feathered music-makers. For instance, the leading flautist was an elephant, whose aspect whilst diligently blowing his *Querpfeife* under his trunk was irresistibly comical. The triangle was being gravely tinkled by a Royal Bengal tiger of alarmingly trucu-

lent mien—a portly old lion, his tail comfortably adjusted across his knee, led the violoncello—a solemn pelican was tooting the French horn, its mouthpiece inserted in the side of his bill—the drums were being administered to by a mild-eyed grey bullock of the true Banat breed—side by side, amongst the first violins, were a bear, a colossal perch, and a frog of prediluvian dimensions—the two bassoons were deftly handled by a mammoth spider and a shiny sturgeon, whilst a giant prairie tortoise clashed the cymbals as though that were the exclusive function to fulfil which was his inborn mission in life. The leader, a famous German *chef d'orchestre*—appeared as a gorilla of unexampled hideousness, quite the most appalling creature my eyes had ever thitherto beheld; and he conducted with a mimic knotted club formidably suggestive of “homicide with intention.” The whole tableau was irresistibly provocative of convulsive and inextinguishable laughter. Moreover, facing this zoological band at the opposite end of the hall was installed another “full” orchestra, consisting of life-size puppets set in motion by machinery, and occupying the lid of a Brobdingnagian musical box, the inside of which was tenanted by a real live military band in full play, so that its strains, produced by an unseen agency, seemed to proceed from the dolls, whose conductor, a singularly limber automaton, rivalled his *dos-dos*, the gorilla, in wildly energetic action. Taken in connection with the practice of the divine art, the orchestral menagerie was the funniest sight a musician could hope to look upon in the flesh. Of the puppet band one wearied readily; not so of the harmonious wild beasts, whose “infinite variety” custom “could not stale.”

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

“OVERTURES” AND ORGANS IN THE NORTH.

“AND his brother was named Jubal, from whom descended fiddlers and pipers.” Such is, we believe, the Lutheran version of a familiar passage concerning the paternity of those who handle the harp and the organ. The father of such abandoned votaries has much, indeed, to answer for. In the “Land o’ Cakes,” at any rate, doth he not periodically rouse the ire of the “unco guid” amongst the Beggites, the children of the hill country—where the veritable apostle of the North lays down the law and the gospel with no uncertain sound—and the dwellers in the tents of Shem who pin their faith to the Ferniegair dogma? Mr. Macaskill of Greenock is the latest gladiator, and he it was who recently moved an “overture” in the Free Presbytery of the Scotch Sugaropolis. That was an affecting operation to be sure, though how, a stolid Largo can be “moved” we are not now prepared to say. One marvels, indeed, at the remarkable pertinacity with which our Scotch clerical friends cling to the “overture.” It is a pet phrase in their church courts, though, to the musical mind, it is usually associated with “sinful

wee fiddles,” and serpents, as also Sabecas from the band of Nebuchadnezzar. The Rev. Murdoch Macaskill’s “overture” was replete with the usual “Whereas’s,” and one of these took the shape of a vigorous protest against the “craving” for instrumental music in the services of the sanctuary. That unholy desire could only “indicate a serious declension from Presbyterian simplicity and purity of worship,” and, shocking to relate, if the “organ were introduced into churches all sorts of instruments might also be introduced by those who fancied them.” Clearly our conservative friend discerns an early resuscitation of the Kinnor, the Toph, the Khatsotsrah, the Ugab, and the Shophar. Possibly he also scents an attack of bagpipes at the hands of Duinnewassels arrayed in all the glory of fluttering tartans and philabegs. A close acquaintance, it just occurs to us, with the properties of the Shophar might not be altogether desirable, for in its unkempt condition the horn of the irascible ram is not a particularly savoury article. But this by the way. It need not be said that, at the coming May meetings, the red rag of instrumental music will be found disporting itself in the troubled breezes of the Free Assembly Hall. We have a lively recollection of last year’s “overtures” and deliberations there. Somebody, for example, solemnly reminded an esteemed evangelical that the vocal exercises of the birds of the air were all the more enjoyable by reason of the lack of organ obbligati. There was quite a Wagnerian chaos amidst Dr. Begg’s remarkable thunder. The working up was wonderful, and the Newington pastor cared not for the character of the harmony (with its “hisses,” &c., &c., *motiven*) so long as he had it out with flutes and brass bands, with the wicked men who “play creditably the big drum.” *En passant*, the doctor’s “long lost brother” must, surely, have turned up on one occasion at Denny, just as a cantata yclept *Daniel* was on the eve of being performed. To our unfeigned sorrow, the meek Daniel was refused admittance to the parish kirk. A respectable heritor got irate, and would have none of Messrs. Bradbury and Root’s unoffending cantata. There was much temper expended at the time, and one “douce buddie” was quite certain that, given a performance of an oratorio within the walls of his beloved church, terpsichorean festivities would follow as a matter of course. He was, probably, overflowing with the spirit of Jenny Geddes, the decent old lady, and prototype of the venerable dame hailing from a certain Scotch parish, whose wrath at the organ was, in its way, admirably expressive. “Ech, sirs, I maun awa, awa; they’ve begun to dance in the Lord’s hoose.” Praise by machinery was in this manner resented. With Dr. Begg and Co., the modern Jenny preferred that the human organ should alone ring out the strains of “Coleshill,” “Bangor,” or “Martyrdom.” She had a soul above a hurdy-gurdy, a holy horror of aught believed to savour of the City of the Seven Hills.

It will be interesting to watch the forthcoming debate. Arguments are absolutely thrown away on

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old-world people like the Macaskills. They are, doubtless, well meaning, but they cannot perceive that, now-a-days, we go to church less to be sermonised than to perform acts of worship. Clearly, also, what in the matter of trumpets and shawms was good for the Psalmist, is not at all bad for 19th century times. Dr. McMillan will, at Edinburgh, possibly tell us again, and in his own manly style, how the apostles were debarred from using instrumental music, if only on account of their being pilgrims and wanderers on the earth, and thus, perforce, strangers to a fixed and settled mode of worship; how the church of the catacombs, hiding in dens and caves of the earth, had neither the means to purchase, nor the opportunity to employ, an organ as an adjunct to worship. The Reverend Doctor was also on the right rail when he reminded his co-presbyters that the use of instrumental music was not a retrogression in the direction of Rome, that in the Pope's own chapel the organ was conspicuous by its absence. There are indications to show that the Macaskill bogey will be satisfactorily disposed of at this time. That is to say, a sort of "Permissive Bill" enactment, will, in all probability, be passed. Each congregation would, thus, be left to its own desires in the matter of the "Kist o' whistles." Elysium, moreover, may not be far distant, and when we pull up there the Beggs and the Macaskills will, doubtless, be found tuning their lyres to the exhilarating strains of the Rev. John Skinner. The worthy old pastor sings, as everybody knows, concerning:—

"Ony sumph that keeps up spite,
In conscience I abhor him."

And then he goes on to say how we shall all be:—

"Blythe and merry, blythe and merry,
And make a cheerfu' quorum,
And dance till we be like to fa'
The reel o' Tullochgorum."

F.

The genesis of *Hiarne, the Minstrel-King*, Marschner's posthumous opera, which created such a sensation upon the occasion of its recent production at the Royal Opera House, Munich, affords the author of the libretto, Wilhelm Grothe, an opportunity for favouring the German musical public with some unusually lively and readable narrative. "It was the summer of 1856," writes the poet, "the sun was blazing in the sky, and pedestrians were compelled to take refuge from his rays in the pastry-cooks' shops. I also, and Hermann Mueller, the present stage manager of the Hanover Court Theatre, had fled from the heat into a beerhouse at that time much frequented by the literary Bohemians of Berlin. In the course of conversation Mueller told me that Heinrich Marschner had made up his mind not to compose anything more for the stage. 'Nonsense!' I exclaimed, 'cats never give up mousing. Only let him have a good libretto!' 'If you will risk it, I will take the text with me a fortnight hence, when I am going to see him.' 'Done along with you! it shall be ready by then.' As soon as I got home I caught sight of a little poem I had written called *The Minstrel-King*, subsequently incorporated in my collection of ballads hight 'Northern Legends,' and said to myself 'That will do.' The myth I

had taken from Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian; into his story I dovetailed the Tyrsing-Sword, and made up a libretto thus:— Hiarne loves the daughter of Trotho III., is banished by the latter, and, whilst living in his castle, hears of the monarch's death, and that Asloga (the princess) is being worried with offers of love by her uncle, Uller. This magician can only be vanquished by the Tyrsing-Sword, which, when drawn in a good cause, always conquers, the charms embossed upon the blade, however, producing highly unpleasant effects upon its proprietor in the contrary case. Hiarne wrests the weapon from its supernatural guardians, and with it wins his bride. During the nuptial rejoicings, however, the tidings reach him that the true heir to the throne, Friedebrand, believed to have perished long since, has landed, and that Uller has joined him. Hiarne's army is surprised, and Tyrsing turns against him. Lateron, disguised as a venerable Skald, he seeks to recover his betrothed, and is discovered by Friedebrand, who forgives the loving pair, and all ends happily. Marschner took to the libretto, though he would have preferred Jupiter and Venus to Odin and Freya. The opera was completed in 1859; but the Master was not destined to witness its performance. Four-and-twenty years have flown since then, and I have at length to thank Herr von Persfall's keenness of perception for the production of *Hiarne* on a stage of universal renown. Marschner himself always feared the envy of his musical contemporaries, and he had reason to do so. *Hiarne* has now achieved the success it deserves; that might not have been the case had it been produced during his life."

One fine spring morning, just fifty-three years ago, two German gentlemen, father and son, called upon the renowned music-master, St. Georges, and sent up their cards, upon which were inscribed, respectively, "M. de Flotow" and "M. Frédéric de Flotow." They were ushered into the musician's study, and, after due exchange of salutations, St. Georges inquired "what had procured him the honour of their visit?" "Sir," replied the elder of the two, "my son desires to become a celebrated composer. Is that possible?" "Certainly, if your son possesses the necessary talent," was the answer. "How much time would he require to achieve his purpose?" "That I cannot precisely determine; but let us say five or six years." "Five years," muttered Flotow, senior, and, after a few seconds' pause, continued, "for that length of time I can manage to make my son an allowance, but for no longer. Would you have the goodness to look after him and stand by him in word and deed throughout that period?" This St. Georges promised to do, after he had put the youth through his facings in the elements of musical science; and the worthy old Mecklenburg squire took his departure. Five years later, to the very day, he wrote to his son to the effect that, as the latter had during the interim produced nothing worth mentioning, he could not consent to continue his allowance. Off went Friedrich von Flotow to his Mentor, St. Georges, for advice. "What shall I do now?" asked he. "Stop here," replied St. Georges. "Without money?" "Do as other poor artists do, and give pianoforte lessons." Thenceforth von Flotow maintained himself entirely by teaching, until, three years later (1838) he achieved a moderate success with his *Duc de Guise*, when his father once more unloosed his purse-strings, nor ever again, whilst he lived, refused to assist "the celebrated composer," his son.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters connected with the literary department of this Journal must be addressed to the EDITOR.

Communications intended for insertion will receive no notice unless accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

The EDITOR cannot undertake to return articles of which he is unable to make use.

All business letters should be addressed to the PUBLISHERS.

Advertisements should reach the Office not later than the 7th in order to insure insertion in the issue of the month current.

At the request of several Subscribers, a certain amount of space in each issue of THE LUTE will henceforth be devoted to answering such questions of general interest as our readers may address to us.

ANSWERS.

W. S. (Holywood). All particulars respecting scholarships at the Royal College of Music may be obtained by addressing the Hon. Secretary, C. Morley, Esq., Royal College of Music, South Kensington, W.



THE LUTE.

LONDON, TUESDAY, MAY 15, 1883.

AFTER noticing Henry VIII. with comparative brevity in the *Voltaire*, M. Gounod has now, in the last number of the *Nouvelle Revue*, criticized it at length. Composers writing of one another are expected, according to M. Gounod, to be insincere. Their blame is attributed to envy, malice, and other forms of uncharitableness; their praise to an intimate conviction that the object thereof will never be a formidable rival. He then enters upon an eulogium of M. Saint-Saëns, which has at least the advantage—from M. Saint-Saëns's point of view—of being thorough. M. Saint-Saëns was, we are told, “un enfant prodigie” —an expression which, to English ears, sounds too much like “infant prodigy;” and for the last twenty-five years he has grown continually in strength, wisdom and knowledge, until now he is armed at all points, and is as complete a musician as can well be conceived. He has the works of all the masters at his fingers' ends, and is quite familiar with the style of each. “He knows them all,” says M. Gounod; which, he adds, “is the surest way not to imitate any of them. He could at will write a work in the manner of Rossini or of Verdi, of Schumann or of Wagner.” The caricaturist of the *Charivari* takes quite a different view of M. Saint-Saëns's knowledge of different styles, and represents him making an operatic salad, which he seasons with “sel Verdi, sel Gounod, and poivre Auber.”

83.
UTE." NO. 5. MAY 15th 1883.

This Part Song is published separately. Price 2^d

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Part-Song.

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W. LONGFELLOW.

Music by
ALFRED R. GAUL.

LONDON:

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Allegretto con grazia.

mf

p

God sent his Sing - - ers up - - on earth With songs of

mf

p

God sent his Sing - - ers up - - on earth With songs of

mf

p

God sent his Sing - - ers up - - on earth With songs of

mf

p

God sent his Sing - - ers up - - on earth With songs of

Allegretto con grazia.

mf

p

sad - - ness with songs of sad - - ness and of mirth, That they might

mf

f

sad - - ness with songs of sad - - ness and of mirth, That they might

mf

f

sad - - ness with songs of sad - - ness and of mirth, That they might

mf

f

sad - - ness with songs of sad - - ness and of mirth, That they might

BE SUNG WITHOUT ACCOMPANIMENT.

P&W. 861.

touch the hearts of men might touch the hearts of men, And
 touch the hearts of men might touch the hearts of men, And
 touch the hearts of men might touch the hearts of men, And
 touch the hearts of men might touch the hearts of men, And
 touch the hearts of men might touch the hearts of men, And

SOME OF THE SOPRANOS TO REST A BAR AND A HALF.
 dim. *rall.* *p* *meno mosso.* Bring them

bring them back bring them back to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* *p* *meno mosso.*

bring them back bring them back to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* *p* *meno mosso.*

bring them back bring them back to heav'n a - gain bring them
 dim. *rall.* *p* *meno mosso.*

bring them back bring them back to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* *p* *meno mosso.*

back to *dim.* *rall.* *Ped.* *rall.* a - gain
 bring them back a - gain bring them back to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* a - gain

back a - gain bring them back to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* a - gain

to heav'n a - gain
 dim. *rall.* a - gain

Ped. * *P&W. 861.* *Ped.* #

Tempo primo.

mf

The first a youth with soul of fire, Held in his hand a

The first a youth with soul of fire, Held in his hand a

The first a youth with soul of fire, Held in his hand a

rit. a tempo.

gol - den lyre; Through groves he wan - der'd, and by streams,

gol - den lyre; Through groves he wan - - - der'd,

gol - den lyre; Through groves he wan - - - der'd,

gol - den lyre; Through groves he wan - der'd, and by streams,

rall. a tempo.

Playing the mu - sic of our dreams. The second, with a bearded face, Stood

Play - - - ing mu - - - sic The second, with a bearded face, Stood

Play - - - ing mu - - - sic The second, with a bearded face, Stood

Playing mu - sic of our dreams. The second, with a bearded face, Stood

sing - ing in the mar - ket place, And stirr'd with ac - cents
 sing - ing in the mar - ket place, And stirr'd with ae - cents
 sing - ing in the mar - ket place, And stirr'd with ac - cents
 sing - ing in the mar - ket place, And stirr'd with ac - cents
 {
 tempo ad lib. p *meno mosso.*
 deep and loud The hearts of all the list'ning crow'd. A grey old man, the
 tempo ad lib. p *meno mosso.*
 deep and loud The hearts of all the list'ning crow'd. A grey old man, the
 tempo ad lib. p *meno mosso.*
 deep and loud The hearts of all the list'ning crow'd. A grey old man, the
 tempo ad lib. p *meno mosso.*
 {
 third and last, Sang in Cathedrals dim and vast, While the ma-jes - tie
 third and last, Sang in Cathedrals dim and vast, While the ma-jes - tie
 third and last, Sang in Cathedrals dim and vast, While the ma-jes - tie
 third and last, Sang in Cathedrals dim and vast, While the ma-jes - tie
 {
 mf
 P&W.861.

p rall. mf >

or - gan roll'd Con - trition from its mouths of gold its mouths, its
rall. mf >

or - gan roll'd Con - trition from its mouths of gold its mouths, its
rall. mf >

or - gan roll'd Con - trition from its mouths of gold its mouths, its
rall. mf >

or - gan roll'd Con - trition from its mouths of gold its mouths, its
rall. mf >

dim. p mf

the mouths of gold . . . And those who heard the Sing-ers three, Dis -
the mouths of gold . . . And those who heard the Sing-ers three, Dis -
the mouths of gold . . . And those who heard the Sing-ers three, Dis -
the mouths of gold . . . And those who heard the Sing-ers three, Dis -
the mouths of gold . . . And those who heard the Sing-ers three, Dis -
- puted which the best might be; For still their mu-sic seem'd to start Dis -
- puted which the best might be; For still their mu-sic seem'd to start Dis -
- puted which the best might be; For still their mu-sic seem'd to start Dis -
- puted which the best might be; For still their mu-sic seem'd to start Dis -

rall.

ff

- cordant e_chos in each heart. But the great Master said, "I see no best in

rall.

ff

- cordant e_chos in each heart. But the great Master said, "I see no best in

rall.

ff

- cordant e_chos in each heart. But the great Master said, "I see no best in

rall.

ff

- cordant e_chos in each heart. But the great Master said, "I see no best in

rall.

ff

mf

rall.

a tempo. mf

kind, but in de_gree but in de_gree; I gave a various gift to each, To

rall.

a tempo.

mf

kind, but in de_gree but in de_gree; I gave a various gift to each, To

rall.

a tempo.

mf

kind, but in de_gree but in de_gree; I gave a various gift to each, To

rall.

a tempo.

mf

kind, but in de_gree but in de_gree; I gave..... a gift to each, To

rall.

a tempo.

cres.

rall.

p

mf

dim.

charm to strengthen, and to teach to charm to strengthen and to teach

cres.

rall.

p

mf

dim.

charm to strengthen, and to teach to charm to strengthen and to teach

cres.

rall.

p

mf

dim.

charm to strengthen, and to teach to charm to strengthen and to teach

cres.

rall.

p

mf

dim.

charm..... and to teach to charm to strengthen and to teach

cres.

rall.

p

mf

dim.

mf tempo primo.

These . . . are the three the three great chords of

These . . . are the three . . . great chords of

These . . . are the three the three great chords of . . .

These . . . are the three . . . great chords of . . .

These . . . are the three . . . great chords of . . .

Ped. *

p

might, And he whose ear is tun'd And he whose ear is

might, And he whose ear is tun'd whose ear is

might, And he whose ear is . . . tun'd whose ear is

might, And he whose ear is tun'd is

Ped. *

tun'd a right Will hear no dis - cord in the three, no

tun'd a right Will hear no dis - cord in the three, no

tun'd a . . . right Will hear no dis - cord in the three, no

tun'd a right Will hear no dis - cord in the three, no

p

SOME OF THE SOPRANOS TO REST A BAR AND A HALF.

meno mosso. *Har - - - mo - - - my*

ny the most per - fect har - mo - ny perfect har - mo - ny

rall. *meno mosso.*

ny the most per - fect har - mo - ny *meno mosso.*

rall. *meno mosso.*

ny the most per - fect har - mo - ny most per - fect har - - - mo -

rall. *meno mosso.*

ny the most per - fect har - mo - ny most

rall. *meno mosso.*

dim. *Har - - - mo - - - ny* *rall. har - - - mo - - - ny.*

ny per - - - fect har - - - mo - - - ny

dim. *rall.*

Har - - - mo - - - ny *har - - - mo - - - ny*

dim. *rall.*

ny most per - fect per - - - fect - har - - - mo - - - ny

dim. *har - - - mo - - - ny*

per - - - -fect har - - - mo - - - ny

dim. *rall.*

Ped. *

P&W. 861.

Ped.

THE
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Year's
Januar

THE Royal College of Music was opened without ceremony, but with some speech-making, on Monday, the 7th inst. There was a fair gathering of social and musical notables on the occasion, and his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales assured them that he hoped to see England become a musical country in a very few years. We hope so too. As an agreeable and characteristically national supplement to the proceedings, his Royal Highness gave a dinner at Marlborough House on the 8th, whereat were present Messrs. Macfarren (G. A.), Sullivan, Barnby, Mount, Kellow Pye, Cusins, and others. The Prince will soon have the support of the entire profession.

As we write a rumour is going about that Professor Macfarren respectfully declines the proffered honour of Knighthood. If this be not true, and he duly receive the touch of the magic sword which converts him into "Sir George," music will then have seven titled professors in the United Kingdom,—Sir M. Costa, Sir J. Benedict, Sir G. Elvey, Sir R. Stewart, Sir Herbert Oakeley, Sir G. A. Macfarren, and Sir A. Sullivan, not to mention Sir G. Grove, who is morganatically attached to the divine art. Common as Knight-hoods are becoming, this is, we think, music's fair share—perhaps the other arts would say unfair share, since chivalric professors of painting, sculpture, architecture, &c., are much fewer in number. Of course, as musical journalists, we accept the distinction gladly, regretting at the same time that an order does not exist specially for intellect and unshared by mayors, sheriffs, entertainers of royalty, *et hoc genus omne*.

In its relation to music, Presbyterianism improves by crossing the Border. It does not cry, "Let the young go rather than organs come." We have before us the programme of a "Praise Service" held at St. John's Wood Presbyterian Church, on the 25th ult., the Pastor, Rev. Dr. Gibson, presiding. It is an interesting document as showing that an important branch of the Christian Church has not hopelessly severed itself from art. The proceedings began with the "Old Hundredth," then a prayer was offered, and the hymn, "O worship the King," sung to "Hanover" tune. After a Scriptural reading and another prayer, Mendelssohn's "Land of Sion" was performed as far as the verse, "They that in much tribulation;" the remainder of the work following an address from the Pastor. Subsequently, the hymn, "Glory be to God the Father" was sung to Henry Smart's tune "Regent Square," and a Benediction brought the service to an end. All the music was conducted by Mr. F. G. Edwards, organist of the Church, and we congratulate him, as well as Dr. Gibson, upon a step which must have benefitted the congregation in many ways. These are not times when religion can afford to disdain the help of any worthy means whereby its attractions may be increased, and surely music, the "handmaid" of religion in all ages, is beyond reproach.

In the eyes of antiquarians the latest Vandalism is the building of the new First Avenue Hotel on the site of No. 45, High Holborn, erstwhile the house of Mr. Bland, music dealer, with whom and where lodged Joseph Haydn on his first visit to this country in January, 1791. The shock is lessened by the fact that Haydn could not have stayed there more than five or six days at the utmost. On New Year's Day he crossed over from Calais, and on January 8th we find him writing to Madame Gen-

zinger to inform her that his address is 18, Great Pulteney Street. In spite of this, to those who have a sneaking affection for the great master of the "powder and peruke" school, and even to those whose modern enlightenment will only permit them to pat him condescendingly on the head, the old house in High Holborn had its associations, and the pang will not be soothed by the character of its successor. But repining is useless, for sentiment must ever yield to the surveyor.

MESSRS. JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT and George Grove are ardent lovers of Schubert—all honour to them; but they share chimerical ideas in common, as well as sound and hearty admiration for a genuine son of Apollo. Mr. Grove believes that a tenth symphony, written at Gastein, yet remains to be unearthed—in the face of any conceivable hypothesis to the contrary; and Mr. Barnett may fancy that the shade of Schubert will hover in graceful transport around his (Mr. Barnett's) head, because the English musician has filled up the sketch-score of the symphony in E, No. 7, which the author neglected to complete. Such a singularly rapid worker as Franz Schubert, was likely to be led away by the *cacoëthes scribendi*, and, from what data are yet extant, there is nothing whatever to show us that the E major symphony was not started as one of these *tours de force* in which the composer delighted, what time the spirit moved him. That he tired of his task is evident; and, possibly upon reviewing the outline which he had prepared in a calmer hour, he thought that the work could not possibly repay the labour of completing it. This is the merest surmise, but it is as open to consideration as other conjectural opinions. Coming down from the clouds, however, to plain fact, Mr. Barnett has filled in the score with loving reverence for the master, whose spirit it completely reflects. That the musical world is much the richer for his endeavours we cannot affirm; but Schubert's 7th symphony is now accessible to the public, and they can form their own opinion of the wisdom of filling in a sketch which, in itself, is one of the most unique things existing.

HERR HANS RICHTER is once more in our midst, this time for the seventh season, the present series of orchestral concerts given under his *bâton* consisting of nine entertainments, dated May 7th, 10th, 21st, and 28th; June 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th; and July 2nd. The first programme "In Memoriam, Richard Wagner" consisted of the *Faust* overture, the introduction to *Parsifal*, the often heard excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde*, and Siegfried's Tod, from *Götterdämmerung*. For the second part Beethoven's C minor symphony sufficed. For the remainder of the season the chief work of novel importance promised is a Suite in D, by Bach. Joachim's Hungarian Concerto will be welcome, as, also, Beethoven's "Choral" symphony; Brahms' *Schicksalslied* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass*. As a matter of fact anything is welcome when given by such a conductor as Hans Richter.

It is only just to Herr Richter to admit the thorough excellence of the opening performance. Such orchestral playing is rarely heard, the conductor's own enthusiasm seeming to pervade the rank and file, the result being a spontaneity and vividness only possible of attainment under special conditions. While disavowing any partiality for Teutonic art, for its own sake or that of its disciples, we must pay tribute where tribute is due; and this Herr Richter exacts both by his status as an artist and as a whole-hearted musician. It

would take a good deal to make *Tristan und Isolde* agreeable to conservative taste, but the "go" of the piece—notably the final movement—was remarkable. The crowning point, however, was reached in the splendid Death-March from the *Götterdämmerung*. The interpretation of this piece was truly magnificent, and applause was showered upon the conductor with unsparing hands at its conclusion.

IN connection with the Philharmonic Overture competition, forty-six works were submitted to the judgment of the examiners, Sir Julius Benedict and Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, and of their number the most promising bore the motto "Rex." The author proved to be Mr. Oliver King, a young man of English birth and training, who at present holds the appointment of pianist to H.R.H. Princess Louise, and resides at Ottawa, Canada. Of course it is presumable that the judges made their selection with perfect freedom from bias, but this carries in its train the reflection that the forty-five rejected works cannot have been of excessive value. Mr. King has great aptitude, and he will probably add to his reputation hereafter in a more distinctive manner than he has done in his "Prize" overture.

AN event which may be legitimately classed amongst occurrences of musical importance was the production of Mr. Thomas Wingham's fourth symphony, in D, at the Crystal Palace, on the 28th ult. Mr. Wingham, well known as among the favourite pupils of Sterndale Bennett, is one of the most popular of the professors at the Royal Academy, and an English musician of sterling attainments. That so young a composer should have already written four symphonies, besides several concert-overtures and a grand mass, speaks well for his perseverance as well as for his determination to approach art only in its most serious and elevated aspects. The symphony in D, though perfectly orthodox in design, and having about it few, if any, traces of the influence of the eccentric school, cannot be rightfully judged after a single hearing. Its merits, however, are sufficiently conspicuous to be immediately acknowledged, and its early repetition is a matter of certainty. Perhaps the most individual movements are the opening allegro, and the menuetto—the latter evincing great originality. The andante and finale are cast in a common mould, and do not offer at once such salient features as the companion movements. Taken as a whole, the symphony must be accounted a valuable and interesting addition to the list of native compositions, and the composer should be congratulated upon having done his best to reflect the school in which he studied, and of which his master was so distinguished and brilliant a representative.

MR. WILLING has thought it desirable to give a repetition of Gade's Birmingham cantata, *Psyche*, H.R.H. the Princess of Wales honouring the performance with her presence. Without doubt, *Psyche* contains some very charming music, and is marked by scholarly ability. Mr. Willing was this time fortunate in his vocalists—Madame Howitz, Miss Giulia Warwick, Miss Alexandra Ehrenberg (one of the most promising pupils of the Royal Academy of Music), Mr. Arthur Thompson, and Mr. F. King. The choir also exhibited improved form, and altogether the work was very satisfactorily interpreted. The sacred part of the concert was of an ordinarily miscellaneous character.

THE new Sacred Harmonic Society distinguished itself by bringing forward Schubert's Mass in E flat,

on the 27th ult. A work of this class, instinct with religious and devotional feeling, can hardly be heard too often—especially when, as in the present case, it represents its author in the fulness of his powers. Amateurs will hardly need reminding that the Mass belongs to Schubert's last year—indeed, it was written only a few months before his early death, the score, now in the Imperial Library, Vienna, bearing the date of June, 1828. To this period of feverish activity belong also the great Symphony in C, and other important works. Though the Mass presents some imperfections in a technical sense—Schubert was not a contrapuntist like Mozart—it is so full of beauties, of original devices of harmony or instrumentation, that it presents a never ending succession of interesting features. As Mr. W. H. Cummings states in his prefatory notes to the Society's published book of words—"The frequent introduction of the brass instruments *pianissimo*, is so thoroughly characteristic of Schubert that their use in this particular manner may be considered his invention: the modulations throughout the work are varied, original and beautiful. Special attention should also be directed to the semiquaver accompaniment of the strings in the 'Crucifixus,' so highly suggestive of fear or suffering. . . . The Credo is a fine example of the noble spirit in which the whole of the text is treated by the composer; and the concluding prayer 'Dona nobis pacem' may challenge comparison with the work of any other writer for beauty and originality, combined with entire appropriateness."

WE are always pleased to note the spirited doings of suburban Choral Societies, which are often found presenting to the amateurs around them works of importance unheard in London proper. One such Institution appears to be the Ealing Choral Association. A correspondent writes:—"Under the present conductor, Mr. Ernest Ford, the Association presents to its subscribers not only the works of the Great Masters, but those of composers who are becoming famous, and whose efforts are not commonly known. First in importance among the latter class was Massenet's Cantata—or as he terms it—Antique Idyl, *Narcissus*, a work which should become popular, as it is full of beautiful music, much of which, particularly as regards rhythm, is of startling originality. The part of *Narcissus* was sung at a Concert given on April 19th, by Miss Thudichum, with great success; her rendering of the address to the 'Fountain,' calling forth a storm of applause. The Choir sang their trying music admirably, and notwithstanding the incessant changes of time, attacked the various points with great precision. Of the ultimate success of the work there cannot be a doubt." Nor should there be any question as to the continued prosperity of the Ealing Choral Association.

MR. EMIL BEHNKE recently delivered a remarkable lecture on "The Human Voice." In explaining the manner and mechanism of right breathing, which is the foundation of all proper production of sound, which is in turn the foundation of all good singing, the lecturer strongly inveighed against the unhappy corset, and adduced, as proof of his arguments, the case of a pupil, who, wearing this instrument of torture, registered only 100 cubic inches on the spirometer, and when freed from its restraint, could blow 142 inches with ease! This appears convincing. The larynx or voice-box was illustrated by large working models, the gist of the description being the danger of "made" tones and the advisability of not forcing the "registers" beyond the

limits a lantern soft pale and nas the act the pro falsetto lecture Mr. Len most pa through tivesyst about t the clo men of probabl WHEN first tim make-up thought had he a popula John He the Bro exact c Talmage made at caricatu shape, whiskers subject papers, with Dr. friends a the bills the place Nor did to arrest persisted Lawyers as their interfere complain consider similar o the New character resemblan depicted b Tragedia however any int Howson of burles eminent were int comedies at their see them they were by the dr in the M of his Ex took no o and mad Talmage But prob

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limits assigned by nature. By means of a magic-lantern were shown photographs of Mr. Behnke's soft palate in the act of producing pure vocal tone and nasal tone, and of that gentleman's larynx in the act of singing. Of the latter, one illustrated the production of a chest-register, the other of a falsetto note. This extremely useful and instructive lecture was followed by an address from the chairman, Mr. Lenox Browne, F.R.C.S., who stated that for the most part trouble arose in the vocal organs purely through their abuse or through disorder of the digestive system. As Mr. Behnke is severe upon the ladies about the corset, to which the more it is abused the closer they cling, so Mr. Browne would deprive men of alcohol and tobacco. Practical result will probably be as great in one case as in the other.

WHEN Mr. Rutland Barrington appeared for the first time as the curate in the *Sorcerer*, his clerical make-up was much commented upon, and was thought rather risky. What would have been said had he dressed and arranged his face in imitation of a popular preacher? This was lately done by Mr. John Howson, who in the *Sorcerer*, as performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, is, it is said, the exact counterpart of the eminent divine Dr. Talmage. The posters announcing the play were made attractive, says an American journal, "by a caricature of the famous parson, whose angular shape, expansive mouth, stiff and coarse side whiskers, and thin, bony hands, make him a favourite subject for the caricaturists of the illustrated papers." The exhibition of the posters adorned with Dr. Talmage's burlesque portrait enraged his friends at the Tabernacle, some of whom followed the billstickers through the streets, and tore down the placards almost as fast as they were put up. Nor did their indignation stop here. They threatened to arrest the actor, and put a stop to the play if he persisted in appearing in his Talmage make-up. Lawyers, however, were consulted, and they gave it as their opinion that Mr. Howson could not be interfered with unless Dr. Talmage himself made a complaint. This, sensibly enough, he declined to do, considering the whole matter beneath notice. A similar case occurred some years ago, at one of the New York theatres, when a well-known character, Count Johannes, was offended by a resemblance which he detected, or thought he detected between himself and Sothen's *Crushed Tragedian*. The fuss made by the Count did not however interfere with the play. Sothen disclaimed any intention of caricaturing the Count; and Mr. Howson might similarly have repudiated any idea of burlesquing Dr. Talmage. It is said that the eminent personages, whose counterfeit presentations were introduced by Aristophanes in his satirical comedies, used as a rule to laugh with the audience at their own effigies, not that they were pleased to see themselves made ridiculous, but simply because they were unable to recognise themselves as distorted by the dramatist. Talleyrand, when the elder Farren, in the *Minister and the Mercer*, made up in imitation of his Excellency, at that time Ambassador in London, took no offence whatever. He went to see the play, and made a point of applauding Mr. Farren. Dr. Talmage is not reported to have gone to this length. But probably he does not attend theatres.

THE suffering Briton who patronises theatres rests content to be mulcted in extra fees for securing his seat beforehand; for being shown into his place; for being allowed to take off and deposit his overcoat with a custodian; for a book of words which contains the names of the *dramatis personæ*, but not

those of their representatives; and for a programme which tells the names of the actors. But now a new grievance has arisen, and albeit it is vain to kick against the pricks, kicking will be pretty general. We allude to the practice of "sandwiching" advertisements of songs and pianoforte pieces in opera books. You buy your book, and begin to peruse it. When you are half-way through the first scene you light suddenly upon a red page, illustrated with music-type, setting forth the first few bars of some song or instrumental piece. We saw a man at a theatre near Charing Cross who felt the red paper interruptions very keenly. No doubt his nerves were faulty, but after he had torn out the seventeenth "sandwich," he abandoned both the book and the house.

THE last issue of a monthly contemporary contains an article, "Joachim and Sarasate," which amusingly exemplifies the curious combination of "gush" and ignorance now so often met with in quasi-artistic circles. It makes a comparison between the two violinists, and is genuinely comic reading. Joachim, says the lady writer, is a performer on the violin, while Sarasate is a violin himself—"at any rate, he makes his instrument a part of him, and he holds his bow as if it were a slender lily he had gathered *en passant* to play with (!)." Joachim stands "dignified and respectable . . . taking without any fuss the pre-arranged terms for certain seasons offered him by Messrs. Chappell & Co., and playing for those terms in a learned, scientific, and artistic manner, of which too much cannot be said in praise." But Sarasate—the "wilful Sarasate"—will not farm himself out to anybody nor play at all unless he feels in the humour, which is somewhat remarkable since he fulfils all engagements with punctuality. The writer we fancy must be the same young lady who observed in society a few nights ago: "O yes; Frank Holl makes much money by portraits, but that is not art. I know a painter who touches a brush only when inspiration comes on him." We find the cream of our fair scribbler's article in a passage which could not possibly be surpassed: "And if the strings were not perfectly in *unison* (the italics are ours) it would be a sheer impossibility to dash off those brilliant and wonderful harmonics which glisten like so many points of vivid light in the rainbow radiance of a Beethoven *symphony* or a Mendelssohn concerto; harmonics so clear, bell-like and pure, that one listens to them half bewildered, thinking that there must be some fairy violin in the distance, echoing Sarasate's wonderful variations. Joachim, too, is a skilful master of harmonics, but his harmonics do not take us by surprise—they do not leap living, as it were, from the instrument—they simply assert themselves delicately, as the satisfactory result of long and arduous study. Sarasate's harmonics live, breathe and burn," &c., &c. We stop here, because the reader wishes to put down *THE LUTE* and laugh.

SOME new light is cast upon Richard Wagner's character by Franz Muncker, a son of the Bayreuth Burgomaster, in a paper headed "Reminiscences," and recently published in a Viennese magazine. An impression has been for many years past prevalent throughout Europe that Wagner not only believed himself to be the greatest composer the world had ever known, but that he revelled in the adulation of his disciples, and heartily despised as well as disliked anyone who withheld from him the worship he considered his due, or failed to recognise the surpassing merits of his music. Franz Muncker,

his intimate personal friend and a daily visitor at Wahnfried during Wagner's yearly sojourns in Bayreuth, represents him as "disliking to be regarded as a phenomenal, or even exceptional being. . . . He was of late years constantly surrounded by eager admirers and fanatical followers, and put up with them (though not always); but they gave him no delight. He preferred to them—sometimes very conspicuously—his friends of independent opinions, and often complained to these latter that he could scarcely ever get up an interesting conversation with the others, because they invariably agreed with everything he said. 'Come and sit by me,' he would whisper to a friend who had views of his own; 'let us get away from these tiresome fellows who are always saying "Yes." . . . Nothing annoyed him so much as when his admirers, in their exaggerated homage to his person, happened to misapprehend his wishes and perpetrate some act of silly indiscretion. After the first performance of *Parsifal*, he told the loudly applauding audience that he gratefully accepted their manifestations on behalf of his artists, but begged them not to summon him before the curtain in the usual way with the call of 'Author.' At the next performance, his rabid worshippers strove with all their might, by hissing and groaning, to suppress the general public's manifestations of approval, upon which he angrily exclaimed to my father, 'These Wagnerians are the stupidest people in the world; I should like to break down the theatre doors with their heads. They must be hissing, indeed! It is disgraceful!' And he did not hesitate to tell them so to their faces, later on."

"IT WAS his constant endeavour to cultivate ripe and independent judgment in those of his disciples who were in close personal relation to him. To a musical student, who spoke to him of Mendelssohn's and Schumann's works rather contemptuously, he presented such of their compositions as he happened to possess, with the recommendation to 'thoroughly study the works of those composers and of others spiritually akin to them, before finding fault with them.' . . . He never would allow himself to be measured against or compared with Mozart and Beethoven. 'I should be the greatest fool alive,' he used to say, 'if I attempted to equal those Masters, or to produce anything like what they have produced. I can only hold my own, after and anywhere near them, by proving my intention to do otherwise than they did.' Beethoven, in particular, was always esteemed by him as 'the absolutely Unattainable and Inimitable,' whose compositions it was his greatest delight to conduct. I shall never forget Christmas Day, 1878. In celebration of his wife's birthday, Wagner had summoned the Meininger orchestra to Wahnfried, and rehearsed with its members several purely instrumental works, exclusively Beethoven's compositions. Whilst changing the parts, one of the executants happened to let fall a Beethoven book. As he was stooping to pick it up, Wagner jestingly exclaimed, 'Let it lie, it is of no importance. Our turn comes now; Offenbach and I, we only represent true art. What do we want with Beethoven!' His meaning, revealed by his tone and manner as he spoke, was plain enough to most of us; and yet there were those present who jumped to the conclusion that 'Wagner thought and spoke scornfully of Beethoven!'

"Not only did he, as a general rule, strongly object to be asked to perform his own compositions, but it was particularly disagreeable to him, in mixed

society, to be interrogated with respect to his artistic notions. Above all, the catchword *Zukunftsmausik* (Music of the Future) when unintelligently employed in conversation with him, never failed to put him in a violent passion. He himself never questioned anybody—not even his most intimate friends—about their musical professions of faith; indeed, he had friends who, as he was well aware, did not understand a note of his music, and whom he did not love one whit the less on that account. But he did not think it worth his while to discuss, far less to dispute about the value of his endeavours with persons who had not even an elementary idea of what really were his aims and purposes."

THE Town Council of Leipzig, in its capacity as Keeper of the Register in which are entered the real names of authors publishing works in that city anonymously or under pseudonyms, has just made official announcement to the effect that the libretto of the four act opera by J. F. Kittl, *Bianca and Giuseppe, or the French before Nice*, published in the year 1852 by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel, was exclusively written by Richard Wagner. This fact is worth noting by encyclopædist and compilers of the deceased composer's biography.

FROM THE PROVINCES.

CARDIFF.—Considerable attention has of late been directed to the forthcoming meetings here of the National Eisteddfod of Wales, and in musical circles the extensive character of the musical competitions has excited very general comment. We may state that the meetings are fixed for the 6th, 7th, and 8th of August next, and that the aggregate of prizes offered in all departments is about £1,500. Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to signify her willingness to patronise the Eisteddfod, and the announcement, which was made through Sir E. J. Reed, M.P., gives general satisfaction.

Mr. B. Richards recently addressed a Cardiff audience on the subject of Musical Education. He had attended that town as the official representative of the Royal Academy, and had just concluded his examination of the local students. He was suffering from a cold and expressed a fear that this would be his last visit to Cardiff. In the course of his address he said: The great giants of the art (Music) whose works are left to us as works of inestimable value would tell you were they here to night how far they were from accomplishing perfection. Believe me, this great perfection of all things is reserved for our eternal future, and not to be achieved in this world; and therefore our minds are naturally directed to that glorious Heaven which we all hope, when this student's career of ours is finished, to attain. Addressing himself more particularly to any of the local students who were present he continued: I doubt not that most if not all of you, have studied the whole of the works, and not merely the two which you have had the option of selecting for yourselves. You who have studied the whole will have observed how judicious that selection has been—how every example of technique in the art has been illustrated so far as it was practicable. You have the earlier schools of Bach and Handel, in which the mechanical, the curious rhythm, and fugal forms are made prominent. Three good examples of fugues are given by both these great men, and one by a more modern writer, Mozart. By fugue is meant a given phrase of two or three bars, so called (technically) the subject, which is made "to fly" (as the word implies) through the various parts, fine

appearing then in every part modified in fugues—engaged. different graceful his allegro is an cination wh tures to n effected w have also Beethoven's polonaise and play Academy except th study th your mind beautiful importanc you for y your fing into your that I sho commend cian, and has done course of And this importanc accomplish volumes of mation. P the trashy that waste more than ence betw combined. you over s or nothing think the teachers, i examination teachers a models for ladies goin over some of manag for witho playing is mitee hav advancemt the results they could popular tr for these manifest operating.

SHERBO given on Fund, the Mass, and

appearing in the highest, or soprano, then in the lowest, then in the middle, and finally appearing in its turn in every part, and afterwards curtailed or extended and modified in relative and other keys. Very curious specimens of imitation are to be met with in some of these fugues—something like a dialogue, in which two are engaged. Now, referring again to the lists, you have the different forms of the minor mode. Then you have the graceful ideas of Sir Sterndale Bennett exemplified in his *allegro grazioso*. Among the other works selected is an example from Chopin in which you find some instances of enharmonic modulation—that modulation which enables us to pass from keys with flat signatures to remote ones with sharps—in fact, a modulation effected without taking the fingers off the keys. We have also an extract from the works of that giant writer, Beethoven, usually thoughtful and grave, but, in the polonaise which has been selected, somewhat more light and playful than he is wont to be. In fact, the Royal Academy has set before you examples of every style except that which is vulgar—examples which, if you study thoughtfully and diligently, must eventually train your mind to thoroughly enjoy and appreciate all that is beautiful in art. Believe me that it is of the highest importance what should, or should not, be placed before you for your study and practice; your tastes as well as your fingers have to be educated. Now, had I looked into your music folios a little while ago I doubt not but that I should have found much there that would not have commended itself to the thoughtful and educated musician, and so far you will agree with me, that the Academy has done much for you if it has only set you on the right course of study to become truly educated musicians. And this question, "What to study?" is of immense importance. You may eke out your hour at the piano and accomplish nothing, just as it is possible to wade through volumes of books without acquiring one crumb of useful information. Printers and publishers are responsible as much for the trashy music in circulation as the heaps of trashy books that waste and squander away the youthful hours. Nay, more than waste, they corrupt. Now there is some difference between amusement and study, although both may be combined. But your practice at the piano, if it has not helped you over some difficult passage or passages, has done little or nothing for you as a student pushing onwards, and I think the Royal Academy has helped both you and your teachers, if they be teachers worthy of the name. These examinations (Royal Academy) have backed up your teachers against the natural inclination to idle stuff, and they have defined, in what they have set before you, proper models for study and practice. It is gratifying to see so many ladies going in this year for paper work, and it is moreover somewhat encouraging to the principal and committee of management, who have your interests at heart, for without attention to this department, pianoforte playing is reduced to a mechanical operation. The committee have undertaken these examinations purely for the advancement of the art in every part of the kingdom, and the results have been most gratifying. It is the only way they could possibly reach the masses, and ultimately raise popular taste; and although this is only the third year for these examinations, the effect produced has been manifest in every town where the Academy has been operating.

SHERBORNE.—On Tuesday, April 10, a Concert was given on behalf of the Abbey Choir Boys' Endowment Fund, the first part consisting of Mozart's Twelfth Mass, and the second part being miscellaneous. The

soli were taken by Miss May Bell, R.A.M., Mrs. Lyon, Mr. Witherington, and Mr. R. W. Mills, and the whole of the Mass went (to quote a local paper) "with smooth precision," the accompaniments being rendered very creditably by an orchestra, which, with the exception of Mr. Rumsey, the leader, was composed entirely of amateurs. In the second part Miss Bell charmed the audience with her expressive singing, Mr. Mills also gaining great applause. The chorus contributed some part songs and the band two overtures in very good style, thus making up a very successful Concert. The orchestra and chorus, numbering nearly 100, were conducted by Mr. G. E. Lyle, organist of Sherborne Abbey, &c.

LUDLOW.—The Ludlow Amateur Choral and Orchestral Society (president, the Rev. F. A. Gore Ouseley, Bart., Mus. Doc., &c.) gave their second Concert of the season, at the Assembly Rooms, April 17th, when Hutchison's new cantata, *The Story of Elaine*, and a miscellaneous selection of vocal and instrumental music were performed. The soloists were Madame Clara West, Miss Lottie West, Mr. H. Byolin, and one or two local amateurs. Leader of the band, Mr. T. Watkis; conductor, Mr. R. Bartholomew.

EXETER.—The Western Counties' Musical Association celebrated the sixth year of its prosperous existence in this city on the 19th ultimo. Lord Devon is president of the Association. The choir numbered 360 voices, and the orchestral accompaniments were rendered by a band of about 60 performers (including 25 professionals). *The Creation*, Haydn's noblest work, was performed in the morning. The soloists engaged in the oratorio were Mdme. E. Wynne, Messrs. Santley, H. Guy and Bridson. The composition of the chorus was 140 trebles, 90 alti, 60 tenors and 70 basses. These had practised at thirteen centres in the Western Counties. The 60 instrumentalists forming the band included 11 first violins, 11 second violins, 7 violas, 7 violoncellos, 3 horns, 3 trombones, 2 trumpets, and the usual drums. The spacious Victoria Hall—capable of holding more than 3,000 persons—was well filled. The performance was very creditable to the chorus and orchestra; the choruses indeed went magnificently for the most part, and the band did its work well. But the soloists were not so successful. Mme. Wynne was evidently singing under the disadvantage of a severe cold, and Mr. Santley seemed indisposed. Mr. E. M. Vinnicombe (Exeter), occupied the seat at the great organ, and Mr. G. M. Rice (Torquay) led the orchestra with practised skill. Mr. W. J. Wood, Mus. Bac. (organist at the Cathedral) conducted with care and efficiency. In the evening, Barnett's *Ancient Mariner* was given, and hundreds of persons were unable to gain admittance to the hall. Both band and chorus performed their part in the pleasing cantata with vigour and success, and the soloists seemed to have gained in spirit and voice. A miscellaneous Concert followed, in which Miss McKenzie figured creditably. Mr. Santley sang "The Devout Lover" in splendid style, and Mr. Guy was extremely effective in his many efforts. The festival altogether was a grand success—the most encouraging the Western Counties' Musical Association has yet celebrated.

The Saturday evening popular organ recitals are giving great satisfaction. A series of Friday afternoon recitals has now been inaugurated. Among the organists whose recitals have been conspicuous successes during the past month, are Mr. W. J. Wood, Mus. Bac. (Cathedral organist), Mr. E. M. Vinnicombe (Exeter), Mr. Sinclair (organist Truro Cathedral), Mr. Joseph White (Teignmouth), and

Mr. Thomson (Withycombe). The directors of the Victoria Hall have under consideration a suggestion to start weekly Concerts of a high-class character.

GLASGOW.—The Queen's Park U.P. Church Choir have had their annual Concert since our last. The cantata chosen for the occasion was Mr. J. F. Barnett's *The Good Shepherd*, other items in the programme being a "Te Deum," by Mr. W. T. Hoeck—heard for the first time—and a composition from the pen of Mr. Allan Macbeth. At the chief Concert for the season of the Addington Musical Association, Van Bree's *St. Cecilia's Day* was put forward. The interpretation was good; but, possibly, the most genuine musical interest centred in the second part of the programme, which introduced some capital examples of Mr. James Allan's experienced training. Dr. Macfarren's *May Day* was given at the second Concert by the Hillhead Musical Society, and at Kelvinside, Mr. Julius Seligmann introduced Mackenzie's cantata, *The Bride*. The Pollockshields amateurs produced Sterndale Bennett's ever-welcome *May Queen* on the 17th ult. An odd arrangement of *Jock o' Hazeldean* found a place in the second part of the programme. The eccentric garment in which Mr. Schweitzer has arranged the favourite old ballad includes a waltz measure, and on the whole the treatment is not inspiring. Mr. Hoeck conducted. This gentleman also presides over the industrious body of instrumentalists who are doing their best to cultivate a taste for good orchestral music in the neighbouring burgh, and who, on a recent occasion, performed Beethoven's symphony, No. 2, the overture to *Don Giovanni*, and the ballet music from Gounod's *Faust*. Master Lamb, a pianist of bright promise, appeared at this Concert with signal success. Mr. Wilford Morgan's cantata, *The Christian Pilgrim*, was given by the Fairfield U.P. Church Choir at their concluding Concert for the season. Mr. McCorvat, Jun., conducted. The annual Concert of the Glasgow Academy Choir, though one of the last "events" of the spring musical season, is by no means the least interesting. The preparatory work is always gone through with amazing zeal and heartiness, for the juvenile idea of musical energy is nothing if not lively and enthusiastic. An excellent programme comprised Dr. Macfarren's *May Day*, Mendelssohn's *Judge me O God*, Mr. William Hume's anthem *God be merciful to us*, and Mr. Eaton Fanning's dramatic chorus *Liberty*. As on previous occasions, the interesting body of youngsters was assisted by a few well-known old Academy pupils, who undertook, of course, the music for tenors and basses. Generally speaking, the various concerted pieces were well sung. Amongst the solos, one, in especial, attracted the highest interest, by reason of the artistic style in which a little fellow phrased his music. The song was "The Baron's Old Castle" from *Undine*, and it is not too much to say that its interpretation would have done credit to a veteran in the vocal art.

At the Royalty Theatre, Mr. Knapp announces the visit of an "Italian Opera Company," with *Rigoletto* for the opening night. Herr Hyllested, a Danish pianist, is also announced to give a recital in the Queen's Rooms on the 18th inst.

LIVERPOOL.—The Liverpool Musical Society, which opened its present season with a great flourish of trumpets, held its third subscription Concert last month, with Van Bree's cantata *St. Cecilia's Day* as the attraction. The work was excellently performed, and the solos were particularly well placed. It was hoped, when this Society was first formed, that it would do much towards raising

the miserably low standard of musical taste in the city. Its first efforts were, however, too ambitious, and have tended to emasculate what had ample opportunities of becoming a strong and vigorous body. There is still time to recuperate, and the council would do well to map out another campaign, the plan of which should appeal to the higher intellect of the musical student, rather than to the vitiated senses of the confirmed concert-trotter.

Although nothing is yet definitely settled with reference to the Philharmonic Society's conductorship, there is very good reason for believing that either Signor Randegger or Herr Richter will be asked to accept the baton. Either of these gentlemen would be acceptable, but it is doubtful whether they would consider the fish worth the catching. If the selection committee really want a working leader, and one who would be able to keep the erratic forces on the orchestra in proper control, why not ask Mr. Villiers Stanford?

The *al fresco* noon-day Concerts by the Police band have again commenced. This idea is an exceedingly happy one, and judging by the immense crowd of listeners is equally popular. The institution of a series of instrumental performances, *pro bono publico*, on the vast space in front of St. George's Hall, is one of the few things the council have done worth imitating.

Madame Blanche Cole's English Opera Company has been fulfilling a short engagement at the Prince of Wales Theatre. The only item of special note, was the production, for the second time on any stage (having seen the light at Sheffield the previous week), of a new romantic opera by Mr. Julian Edwards; entitled *Victoria*. The plan of the opera is founded upon Longfellow's *Spanish Student* which is followed with a fair amount of fidelity. The music of the new work is for a first attempt, very promising, but it would be as unsafe to predict for *Victoria* a permanent place on the lyric boards, as it would be unfair to the composer to point out the wisdom of postponing for more mature judgment the presentation of so important a work as a grand opera. Mr. Edwards has ample opportunities, great capability, and a fair field before him, so there is no reason why he should not make another trial.

The initial performance of Dr. Röhner's new opera *Forgive*, at the Prince of Wales Theatre on the 2nd inst., attracted more than usual attention owing to the fact of the composer, librettist, and artists all being local lights. Dr. Röhner who is well-known hereabouts as the writer of several clever works of a different character, has in the present case apparently started with no intention of producing a work of striking originality, but he has certainly shown himself capable of writing very pretty and ear-tickling numbers. The overture is particularly well and powerfully written, but, in common with many other parts, has a constant iteration, which in the end becomes almost painful. The best numbers are those written for the chorus and the weakest are the songs, which in nearly every case, presented an awkwardness of phrasing against which the singers struggled in vain. The libretto, written by Mr. Charles Dyall, is exceedingly tame, and the story, of no interest whatever, could be told in one short act as well as in three long ones. The artists, nearly all new to the lyric boards, did remarkably well, special praise being due to Mr. Addison Hill, a rising baritone, who would be a decided acquisition to any English opera company.

CORNWALL.—Mr. John Radcliff, the eminent flautist, appeared at two organ recitals given one day last month in the Concert Hall, Truro, by Mr. H. Edmond Holt, and

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astonished his audience by a brilliant display of technical skill and felicitous taste. Mr. H. S. Thomas, of Plymouth (pupil of Mr. Radcliff), joined his master in a couple of flute duets at each recital, and in the evening Mr. Pardew, also of Plymouth, played two violin solos—romance in F (by Beethoven), and largo in G (Handel), the latter with organ accompaniment, in a manner befitting his local reputation. Among other things, Mr. Holt performed two of Bach's fugues, Mendelssohn's sonata in C minor, a selection from Spohr's *Calvary*, a cavatina of Raff, an andante by W. Stevenson Hoyte, and the triumphal march from Costa's *Naaman*.

The newly-formed Choral Society at Falmouth made its *début* on the 17th ult. at the Polytechnic Hall with Sterndale Bennett's *May Queen*, and a miscellaneous selection. Some accomplished amateurs sustained the solo parts, and the accompaniments were played on a piano and harmonium by two professional musicians, Mr. Robinson, the parish organist, conducted.

REVIEWS.

NOVELLO, EWER AND CO.

The *Office for the Holy Communion* set to music in the key of G, by the Rev. Donald J. Mackey, B.A., Cantab. Canon and Precentor of St. Ninian's Cathedral, Perth.

Mr. MACKEY here shows himself to be a musician of skill and judgment. He has resisted the promptings of evident ability in the direction of display for its own sake, and has written with due regard for the solemnity of his theme. The music, though simple and restrained, is impressive and admirably suited to heighten the feeling of a devout worshipper. In proof of this several passages from the "Credo and Gloria" might be cited, but it will suffice to recommend this music as specially adapted for use in connection with the most sacred of religious observances.

WILLIAM REEVES.

(I.) *Serenade for Four Voices.* (II.) *Coming Summer.* Four Part Song. Composed by Florence Mary Fulton.

THE SERENADE is a pleasing composition and by its simplicity well adapted for use in singing classes. So, for that matter, is *Coming Summer*, and the two, taken together, would be useful as an exercise in well-contrasted styles. The composer writes not only with correctness but with feeling and may be encouraged to persevere.

MR. GEORGE GROVE suggests that there should be a celebration of Handel's two-hundredth birthday on February 23, 1885, and that the *Messiah* should be given as Handel wrote it, without additional accompaniments, but with extra bassoons, oboes, trumpets and horns.

A CORNISH paper quotes the following from a notice published in a journal circulating in Devonshire regarding an organ recital given by the Truro Cathedral organist at the Victoria Hall, Exeter:—"Perhaps the most obviously picturesque music of the performance was furnished by Guilman's *Marche Funèbre et Chant Séraphique*, the sombre phrases of which were boldly brought out, and, after a unique transition, were succeeded by a glorious outburst, full of splendid effects, which, in their turn, gave way to distant melodies softly dying, and at last terminating almost before the listeners could realise that the number was executed." The writer of this intensely intense notice must be a worshipper of the sunflower and one that feedeth on the lily?

CORRESPONDENCE.

"RURAL MUSIC."

To the Editor of THE LUTE.

SIR,—Doubtless many of your readers must have been especially pleased with, and have thoroughly enjoyed, your excellent paper in the second number (February 15) of THE LUTE, entitled "Rural Music," from the fact of its being—as in my case—a somewhat partial sketch of their own youthful musical experiences in the country.

In a quiet agricultural town of about 3,000 inhabitants, where it has been my lot to hold the post of organist during the past 15 years, the parish church, which has accommodation for nearly 1,500 people, has been closed during the past three months for restoration; so that our services are now held in the Corn Exchange, and I thought it would interest you to know that we have gone back, in a measure, to those "old times" when the music of the sanctuary was furnished by various instruments; for I have organised a small band of three violins, cornet, and double bass, who, with myself at a large American organ, have for the three months (February, March, and April) played the entire music of the Church services, viz., voluntaries, chants, hymn tunes, responses to Commandments, and, at evening service, the full responses, Psalms, &c. I assure you that it has been (and is) done reverently, and without any undue noise in tuning. Moreover, it has given great satisfaction to rector, wardens, and congregation. When your article appeared, after our second Sunday with the above instrumentalists, I showed it to several interested in our temporary musical services, who were very pleased with it, as was also yours obediently.

The Voluntaries already played have been from the Oratorios of *Samson*, *Saul*, *Judas*, *Theodora*, *Messiah*, *Occasional*, *Eli*, and *12th Mass.*,—as well as a slow movement from one of Haydn's symphonies and one of Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas. A list of those to be played each Sunday is posted up at the entrance of the hall.

TABRET AND HARP.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LUTE.

SIR,—For the information of your readers, there has been no distribution of the proceeds of the library of the late Sacred Harmonic Society amongst those who are entitled to the same. From sixty to seventy members will participate in the distribution when it takes place, but several of them, in anticipation of what they are to receive, are "encouraging the development of music" by contributing to the funds of the re-organised Sacred Harmonic Society, who give their fourth and last Concert of the season on Friday, the 11th inst.

A MEMBER OF THE OLD SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE Royal Italian Opera Company has opened its doors for the season, has re-established "Fop's Alley," an institution of such convenience that it is a wonder how it ever came to be abolished, and has brought back the price of stall seats to the time-honoured guinea. Stock operas have been given, Mesdames Pauline Lucca and Sembrich have duly made their welcome appearance; and some other artists have been added to the *troupe*, of whom the French baritone, Mons. Devoyod, is decidedly the most conspicuous.

THE POET'S CORNER.

THE BROKEN SPELL.

JSET a myrtle-seed in the ground,
And watched a day and a night;
When the dews of morning fell around,
A dark yew stood in the light.

I gave my heart for my love to keep,
Whose hands were white as snow;
It came back seared and riven deep,
As if from a furnace-glow.

I set my sail to the western breeze,
And trusted my life to its breath;
It bore me out to the sunless seas,
And the phantom isles of Death.

A pearl gleamed white on the sable sand,
I caught it and held it on high;
It turned to an ashen dust in my hand,
And I cast it back with a cry.

Four stars stood steady in heaven above,
The shape of the cross they made;
I raised my eyes to the sign of love,
And knelt like a child, and prayed.

And out of the stars a splendour broke,
Around them a halo beamed;
And the phantom gloom grew light, and I woke,
To know that I had but dreamed.

F. WYVILLE HOME,

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IT IS not at all unlikely that Dr. Stainer or Dr. Bridge will be asked to compose for the Birmingham Festival of 1885.

MORE musical discoveries. Two unpublished operas by the late Friedrich von Flotow are said to have been found.

It is said that Dr. Stainer will be represented at the forthcoming Gloucester Festival by a new cantata, *Mary Magdalene*.

It is said that Colonel Mapleson intends next season to manage an opera company in Havana, as well as the one in New York.

BALFE'S *Satanella* was revived at the Standard Theatre, in New York, on the 7th instant. Miss Alice May took the name part.

IN Vienna alone Mozart's *Don Giovanni* has been performed 430 times; *Il Flauto Magico*, 366; *Figaro*, 342; *Il Seraglio*, 151.

THE Alhambra Theatre begins a new life in October next. A spectacular fairy opera by Mr. G. R. Sims and Mr. Frederic Clay will be the first piece mounted.

Mr. A. C. MACKENZIE has undertaken to compose an Oratorio for the Norwich Festival in 1884, when also a new Cantata by Signor Randegger will be produced.

THE war between Messrs. Gye and Mapleson, and Mr. Abbey may rage on this side of the Atlantic before long. A second Opera in London is decidedly "on the cards."

Owing to a disappointment in connection with his libretto, Mr. Frederic Clay will not have *Sardanapalus* ready in time for the Leeds Festival. He is now engaged upon an Indian subject with a view to the great Yorkshire gathering.

A FOUR WEEKS' season of German opera began on the 4th instant in New York. The prima donna is Miss Emma Juch, and the musical director Mr. Max Maretzak.

MME. VALLERIA has been impersonating in Ireland the heroine of Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda*. The critics say she does so with conspicuous success. We believe them.

HERR ANGELO NEUMANN will give Wagner's *Nibelungen Ring* in Venice—its first performance in Italy. If success follow, Bologna, Milan and other large cities will be visited.

AMONG the many remarkable reported discoveries of musical compositions is that of a symphony for strings, written by Mendelssohn at the age of thirteen, and found in Paris.

WHAT is the matter with the South London Choral Association? It will be hard work to recover from the effect of the very inferior performance at St. James's Hall a while ago.

A "SIR JULIUS BENEDICT Pianoforte Exhibition" and a "Sims Reeves Vocal Exhibition" have just been added to the prizes previously established in connexion with Trinity College, London.

HERR POLLINI, director of the Stadt Theatre, Hamburg, is said to have purchased the performing right of *Savonarola*, the new opera by Mr. C. Villiers Stanford. He will also produce Mackenzie's *Colomba*.

MR. A. C. MACKENZIE, not resting upon his laurels, produced an Orchestral Ballad, illustrative of Keat's "*La Belle Dame Sans Merci*," at the last Philharmonic Concert. Of this we must take another opportunity of speaking.

AFTER a series of careful experiments, Mr. Thomas has hit upon a method of representing the Good Friday bells introduced by Wagner into *Parsifal*. Bars of steel of varying length and thickness, and slung on a frame, can be made of more accurate tone than bells, and it is these that Mr. Thomas uses. The result is said to be very melodious and effective.

AT the last Concert given by the Highbury Philharmonic Society, Dr. Bridge's motett, *Hymn to the Creator* (the Song of St. Francis of Assisi), for soprano solo, chorus, and orchestra, was performed for the first time with great success. Being a short work, and within the powers of most choral societies, we may look for its appearance in many programmes.

AS we supposed would be the case, Signor Verdi definitely declines to write a work for the Birmingham Festival of 1885. His decision was communicated through M. Heugel, the Paris publisher. We understand that Mr. A. C. Mackenzie is likely to fill the place refused by the Italian master; but foreign art will still have a good representative in M. Gounod, with a new *Requiem*. It is probable that the Committee will apply to Dvorák for a sacred composition.

THE Concert given on Wednesday at the Royal Albert Hall by Messrs. Ambrose Austin (who we are glad to know is restored to health) and George Watts was in every way an enormous success. The programme contained the names of Mesdames Nilsson (her first appearance this season), Trebelli, Robertson and Patey, Messrs. Sims Reeves, E. Lloyd, Santley, Benedict, etc. A special feature of the Concert was Mr. Coenen's Caprice Concertante, played on eight pianos, by sixteen performers. This work, it may be remembered, was first heard on a special occasion at Messrs. Kirkman's rooms some time ago.

